

February 23, 2022

Marlene Megos
Director, CT Teacher Residency Program

SUBJECT MATTER: Governor's Proposed FY 24-25 Budget for Elementary and Secondary Education Agencies

*H.B. No. 6659 (COMM) AN ACT CONCERNING THE STATE BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM ENDING JUNE 30, 2025
AND MAKING APPROPRIATIONS THEREFOR.

Good evening Senator Osten & Berthel, Representative Walker and Nuccio; subcommittee members Senator McCrory, Representatives Felipe and McCarty; and distinguished members of the Appropriations Committee.

My name is Marlene Megos, and I am the Director of the CT Teacher Residency Program with a mission to diversify teachers. I am here to ask you to designate \$5.5 million as a line item in the State Department of Education section of the budget to support all Connecticut districts who wish to partner with a Residency Program specifically committed to training teachers of color.

PA 21-2 Section 378 is being implemented and designated 10% of an increase in Alliance funds for Alliance districts to partner with a residency program to increase diverse teachers. While well-intentioned, the funding mechanism only supports 25 of the 36 Alliance districts, varies greatly and does not support any of the other 133 districts, also obligated to diversify their staff. An example of disparity is that Groton gets \$0, Bridgeport gets \$1,543, and 5 of the 25 funded districts get over \$200,000. Other towns, like Milford, Ledyard, Westport and Ellington have no additional funding. It is admirable that many legislators supported this initial mechanism to increase access to residency training, however, we now have to do this equitably across the state.

Residency programs are well known to attract more diverse candidates; lead to more prepared teachers as a result of a longer apprenticeship; and improve teacher retention. Funding districts helps TRP to increase the number of candidates we train and RETAIN, create more inclusive school

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communities, & specifically train candidates in anti-racist and culturally competent practices to better serve our student population that is over 50% persons of color.

We have placed 65 teachers in classrooms and have 43 additional residents, with 95% identifying as persons of color. To date 100% of our 65 teachers are still teaching in year 1, 2 or 3. While many are still working on the certification assessments, we are able to continue to support our completers so that they are on track to exceed typical statistics on certification completion and retention for candidates of color.

In 2021, Connecticut increased the percent of educators of color to just over 10%. However, with over 50% of students identifying as people of color, we must set more aggressive goals and change who teaches our children. According to the National Bureau of Economic Research, Black students who have a single Black teacher in grades three through five are more likely to graduate from high school and consider college, particularly Black males.

I ask that you continue the great work started in 2021 to support TRP and programs like ours by designating \$5.5 million dollars annually as a line item in the State Department of Education section of the state budget to support the effort of any Connecticut district partnering with a Residency Program that is specifically committed to training teachers of color.

Thank you for your time and consideration this evening.

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Marlene Megos
Director, CT Teacher Residency Program

Sincerely,

Marlene Megos

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Director, CT-TRP

For more information: www.ct-trp.org

